

SECTION 6

FOOD OUTLET SITES

THE PHYSICAL DISTRIBUTION SITE

The distribution site is the location where donated food is physically distributed to needy persons. Distribution sites for the TEFAP food products are basically food pantries, soup kitchens, domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, or allowable children feeding programs. **No private residential facilities or correctional facilities can be used as outlets for distribution of products.** If storage for USDA food products is off-site, RA must have written knowledge of the location of such product and the amount. HCSS staff or designee, USDA staff or designee, RA staff or designee must have access for monitoring or ensuring the safekeeping of said products. Storage off-site without prior knowledge by the RA could result in the loss of USDA food products. Private homes will not be considered.

ACCEPTING AND UNLOADING TRUCKS

Distribution sites in Indiana may receive their food products by various methods. Each RA determines the method of delivery. The following are different and acceptable examples:

- ◆ Outlet can pick up food products at the RA with a vehicle for transporting the product.
- ◆ RA may or may not provide personnel at their storage facility for loading
- ◆ RA personnel can deliver product to the individual outlet or in each outlying county but the outlet must provide personnel for unloading trucks
- ◆ RA can schedule a delivery for one or more outlets at a designated place and time for receipt of food products.
- ◆ RA must make a delivery to each county in their service area, if requested by the outlet. This is not a requirement in the county of the storage facility.
- ◆ RA cannot charge a delivery fee to the outlets for USDA products.

Each RA must account for federal food products released to each site. The RA must use the form (Exhibit E) which records the signature of the site representative receiving the site allocation. (A RA can generate this form if they follow the general design of the OUTLET RECEIPT, however it must meet with HCSS approval) It also records the amount of each product received by the site and the site name and address. RAs are responsible for the proper maintenance of release records.

Outlets (including migrant pantries) may use volunteers and/or paid staff to unload the truck. Outlets may have income-eligible recipients who are willing to volunteer to help unload. However, unloading the truck cannot be made a requirement for receiving pantry products, nor can it be used as an in-kind agreement for volunteers to receive more TEFAP products than they would normally receive. Arrangements may also be made with the county DFC Offices, Township Trustees, or Police Departments for volunteers doing Community Service. The various service organizations and school organizations may be willing help unload trucks, help prepare meals and other types of services.

Whoever unloads the product must be made aware of the importance of counting the product as the shipment is received. Accurate accounting of USDA food products will be impossible if an exact count is not made when the product is unloaded. The necessity of checking for damaged or spoiled product must also be stressed.

STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

All outlets must provide proper storage facilities for the food products received from a RA. All outlets must comply with the same storage and handling regulation that applies to all RAs. Regulations include any directives from USDA, HCSS, Indiana Department of Public Health and the local public health department within the jurisdiction where the outlet is located. RA and/or outlet can be held financially liable for lost product due to damage, theft or spoilage due to improper storage and handling. The Memorandum of Agreement signed by the outlet does not always relieve the RA of its contractual obligations to DFC. The RA remains responsible for assuring that the outlets with a signed Memorandum of Agreement are providing proper handling, care and storage of USDA food products and other donated food.

MINIMIZING LOSSES

Most outlets in Indiana are staffed completely by volunteers. Insurance responsibility is left up to the RA to make the determination if the Outlet or the RA carries the insurance for USDA items. This responsibility will be stated in the Agreement between the RA and Outlet. However, outlets are still obligated to conduct their operations in a responsible manner to keep losses at a minimum. The lead volunteer must train other volunteers to carefully follow approved storage and handling procedures. Distribution sites should use the First In/First Out (FIFO) inventory control system.

USDA food product cannot be in an outlet for more than six (6) months.

Contact RA for transferring product if it is not going to be used. (Product Transfer Form – Exhibit H)

REPORTING LOSSES

HCSS requires that the RA explain all losses, including those experienced by their Outlets. Each RA must balance on a monthly basis with the amount of food products they received and the amount distributed. HCSS is required by federal regulations to pursue recovery of the value of all food lost due to negligence if the value of the food exceeds \$100. The RA is financially responsible for all losses even when the Outlet causes the loss. Losses under \$100 will not be disregarded if there is evidence of fraud or negligence. HCSS should be contacted immediately by telephone if any major loss occurs. USDA does not acknowledge shrink loss.

ALLOCATION OR ISSUANCE RATE

USDA requires that there be a minimum of one break in household size. The RA or pantry has the flexibility to set the household size break(s). Allocation rate for household sizes should be based on the amount all of product available. Recipients who sign the Eligibility Certificate must be permitted to choose the number of items needed for their households. **Remember that food sitting on a pantry shelf does not feed hungry people!**

If your pantry is set up to serve a specific geographical area, and a client comes to your pantry that lives outside of this area, serve the client and explain to them where another pantry is located in the area where they reside. Example Only: Households from 1-4 could choose 15 items plus free items and households of 5 or more could choose 25 plus free items. Various explanations should be found in Section 10, Client Choice.

Number of meals offered for a certain number of days is no longer applicable or accepted or approved by reason of Client Choice.

Homeless recipients are eligible to receive food and can use the County DFC office for their address. The volunteers in each county should know the DFC address in their respective county for such recipients.

USDA product must be mixed in with like product and never dispensed separately. USDA product is to be used as a supplement to all other pantry items.

Recipients may receive USDA food and all other pantry items each time they visit the pantry (based on number of items per household break). That can be as often as the pantry allows, which can be from every week to once every thirty days.